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## Intelligence Information Special Report

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SUBJECT

MILITARY THOUGHT (USSR): Some Problems Involved in Considering the  
Morale-Political Factor When Carrying Out Operational Tasks 50X1-HUM

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Some Problems Involved in Considering the Morale-Political  
Factor When Carrying Out Operational Tasks

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In modern war the significance of all of the factors involved in a victory over the enemy increases immeasurably. An important place among them goes to the morale-political factor, which expresses the capability of the people and their armed forces to bear all of the burdens of a war and to bring it to a victorious conclusion.

The morale-political potential of the people and the army is based on socioeconomic conditions and depends on the sociopolitical system, the relationship of class forces, the nature of the war being waged, etc. Its development also is influenced by the political and ideological activity of the governments and commands of the armed forces of the belligerents.

It is not the purpose of this article to examine the entire complex of problems related to the consideration and exploitation of the morale-political factor in carrying out operational tasks; this is a subject for special research. We deal here with those measures and methods for ideologically influencing enemy forces and population and those ideological means of combat which enable us to achieve results with the least expenditure of forces.

It is well known that V. I. Lenin, ascribing enormous importance to party-political work in the army and navy, turned his attention to the necessity of conducting systematic political work among the enemy troops and population. When the imperialist aggressors invaded the young Soviet Republic, he called for opposing the enemy "not only by means of national war but also by means of propaganda and demoralization of the enemy from within" (Complete Works, volume 37, page 212). Analyzing the results of our victory over the interventionists and White Guardists, he said, "that in those matters in which the most coarse and material factors play a greater role, namely in military affairs, we defeated the Entente by depriving it of workers and peasants dressed in soldiers' uniforms" (Complete Works, volume 39, page 393). This thesis has important significance methodologically since it emphasizes not only the role of

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material, purely military factors in war but also the necessity of combining these with morale-political factors which, if skilfully used, contribute to victory over the enemy. Lenin's ideas on the role of the morale factor have always been taken into consideration in our military strategy and operational art.

During the Great Patriotic War, the study of the morale-combat qualities and capabilities of the enemy was a subject of special concern on the part of Military Councils, military leaders, political organs, and staffs. The morale-political state of the enemy was carefully evaluated during the actual planning and conduct of operations; military actions were combined with measures to undermine the enemy's morale-combat spirit.

We can also cite examples of another type, such as the miscalculation of the Hitler command which was unable, in unleashing war against the USSR, to realistically foresee the full effect of the giant economic and social transformations brought about by the October Revolution. And the events in Vietnam are noteworthy. The US militarists clearly underestimated the morale of the Vietnamese people, supported in their just conflict by the constant and ever increasing aid and support of the USSR and other socialist countries.

It is absolutely beyond question that the importance of the morale-political factor will increase in a world war, if the imperialists unleash one. The clearly expressed class character of such a war undoubtedly will predetermine the ultimate decisiveness of the political and military goals of the belligerents. This class character will not only manifest itself in a striving to achieve the complete military defeat of the enemy but will also have a continuing ideological influence on the troops and population.

The increase in importance of the problem under consideration also is explained by the possibility that missile/nuclear weapons will be used, which will to a large extent increase the dependence of the course and outcome of armed combat on the morale-political state of the masses and on the morale-combat spirit of the troops. The psychological effect of new combat means on the troops and population will be exceptionally great.

To state this problem differently not only disregards the political essence of modern war but also gives paramount importance to military equipment and weapons, and limits our possibilities for influencing the individual who handles these weapons and who has definite ideological convictions and psychological and other characteristics. It must not be

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forgotten that no matter how perfect and destructive the weapons may be, they cannot by themselves, independent of man, decide the course and outcome of a war.

Ideological warfare takes on great importance in wars using conventional weapons, including local wars unleashed by the imperialists. The experience of combat actions in Korea, Vietnam, and other countries shows that belligerents make wide use of means of ideological influence. According to information in the US press, the interventionists have distributed more than six billion copies of leaflets during the period of intensive battles in Vietnam (from the beginning of 1965). Vietnamese patriots are working aggressively to demoralize the enemy forces politically. Despite limited capabilities, they print and distribute leaflets, make loudspeaker broadcasts, and engage in the most varied forms and methods of ideological warfare, which exert considerable influence on the personnel of the interventionists and especially on the puppet forces.

The increase in the aggressiveness of imperialism and in ideological sabotage by the class enemy requires that our commanders and political workers be prepared to use ideological weapons skilfully to accomplish combat tasks and to combine armed combat (as the principal and decisive form) with ideological warfare. The task is to prepare commanders, political organs, and staffs to organize and conduct political work among the enemy troops and population under combat conditions; to increase the practical skills of officers and generals in the sphere of organizing political work among the enemy troops and population; and to improve the methods for using special propaganda means during the combat and operational training of troops.

Let us dwell briefly on the main problems of political work among the enemy troops and population and also on how it influences the course of combat actions.

The effectiveness of special propaganda depends on its close connection with combat actions, on consideration of the political-morale state of the enemy troops and population, and on the ability to put out the clearest and most persuasive appeals and slogans. Explanation of the reasons for an imperialist war; demonstration of its ruinous consequences for the workers and of the invincible might of the socialist commonwealth; appeals to refuse to serve, to refuse to use nuclear weapons, to surrender and, under favorable circumstances, to demonstrate actively against the war; etc., will all strengthen the psychological effect of the employment of weapons of mass destruction which involves the spreading of panic and

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the disorganization and demoralization of the enemy troops and population.

For the implementation of such important and complex measures, the appropriate material base has been provided. For example, a front (fleet) will have at its disposal a portable printing press for issuing up to 500,000 copies of leaflets per day. For radio propaganda, portable broadcasting sets will be used, and in the fleets the radio transmitters of the communications centers will be allocated for this purpose. A combined-arms (tank) army and army corps will include a propaganda detachment with powerful, lightweight loudspeaker broadcasting sets, a radio, and a portable printing press with a capacity of 35,000 to 40,000 leaflets per day. Motorized rifle, tank, and airborne divisions, and also divisions (individual regiments) of marines will have lightweight broadcasting sets. If necessary, divisions can print leaflets on the press of the divisional newspaper. The distribution of leaflets will be carried out by aviation and balloon means (propaganda bombs, aerial delivery crates for propaganda, propaganda balloons), and in an operational-tactical zone -- by missile and artillery means.

Officers of staffs and political organs must be familiar with these possibilities for special propaganda on the ideological-political, morale-psychological and technical plane, and must take them into account when setting up combat and operational training for troops.

Forms of military-political study of the imperialist armies and of the organization and conduct of ideological warfare with the enemy, which have proven their value, are being widely introduced in military districts, groups of forces and fleets. These problems are brought up in courses for command personnel and are discussed at military theory conferences and in the officer training system. Such measures help command-political personnel to make a comprehensive study of the probable enemy, to improve their skills in organizing and conducting special propaganda, and to outline ways for staffs and political organs to cooperate in this field.

We may cite a military theory conference held in October 1968 in the Leningrad Military District, at which were examined the nature of modern war and the tasks of the staff and directorates of a district in increasing readiness for ideological warfare against an enemy under combat conditions. The majority of the presentations were practical; specific suggestions and recommendations were made, many of which should be introduced into the training of staffs and political organs. In the Odessa Military District, 24 similar military theory conferences took place in formations and large units in 1968 at which more than 200 people spoke. The same types of

conferences took place in formations and large units of the Far East Military District, the Transbaykal Military District, the Pacific Fleet, and in other districts and fleets. It is noteworthy that constructive experience is being summarized and conveyed to the troops. For example, in 1968 the Political Directorate of the Belorussian Military District prepared a study summarizing the experience in special propaganda work which had been accumulated in formations and large units of the district. They forwarded the study to large units and units for use in working with officers, staffs, and political organs.

It continues to be desirable that this work be systematized, so that problems concerning special propaganda might be examined not on the general theoretical plane as is still often the case, but with consideration for specific tasks of the respective categories of officer personnel relative to their positions. Broad possibilities for this are opened up in command-staff and operational-tactical exercises and in war games, which make it possible to plan and implement measures for special propaganda in a complex situation, taking into account the requirements of modern war.

The experience of large-scale exercises shows that if problems regarding special propaganda are included in the operational-tactical concept for the exercises and in planning documents, then a situation is created in which the morale-political factor can be considered in planning and conducting combat actions and problems of political propaganda among the enemy troops and population can be worked out more objectively.

It is of practical assistance to prepare materials on the military-political characteristics of the probable enemy, to distribute them among the troops, and to have lectures on this subject. Such work has been actively carried on in the Transcaucasus Military District, the Odessa Military District and the Black Sea Fleet before and during the exercise VESENNIY GROM, and also in the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, the Northern Group of Forces, the Southern Group of Forces, and the Carpathian Military District prior to the exercise SHUMAVA. This work was of great assistance to officer personnel in studying our probable enemies and the specific characteristics of the countries and peoples in the theaters of military operations and on the operational axes.

It is becoming an ever wider practice for the formation commander (commander) to be briefed during these exercises on conclusions drawn from an evaluation of the military-political situation in the theater of military operations (on the operational axis) and the morale-political state of the enemy troops, as well as on other problems, and for him to

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give instructions concerning consideration of these factors. Numerous examples could be cited showing that such an approach aids in calculating both the purely military and the morale-political capabilities of the enemy, and makes possible a more precise determination of the measures needed to undermine his morale-combat spirit.

Thus, during a command war game at a course for command personnel of the Carpathian Military District in January 1969, the deputy chief of the political directorate of the district and the chief of the political department of the tank army were repeatedly briefed regarding the political-morale state of the formations and large units of the probable enemy and the capabilities of the district and the army to organize special propaganda; as a result, there was a purposeful working out of measures for special propaganda. In February 1969, during the command-staff game RAZBEG in which command personnel of the Northern, Baltic, and Pacific fleets and the Naval Academy participated, the first deputy chief of the political directorate of the Baltic Fleet delivered a report concerning the military-political situation in the theater of military operations, measures for setting up political work among enemy naval personnel and the population of enemy coastal areas, and the capabilities of the fleet to conduct radio propaganda. According to comments by the participants in this game, the examination of such problems enabled them to study the military-political situation in the theater more thoroughly, to estimate the level of the morale-political training of the probable enemy and to take it into account in making decisions, and to plan and organize measures for special propaganda.

In many cases, special hypothetical situations are worked out on the basis of a realistic evaluation of enemy morale-political capabilities; this makes it possible to objectively plan and implement measures for special propaganda at each stage of an exercise. In this connection the experience of the Southern Group of Forces, the Turkestan Military District, and certain other districts and groups of forces is useful: the political directorates and staffs drew up hypothetical situations which, together with reconnaissance data on the enemy, were reported to commanders, staffs, and political organs so that this data could be taken into account in planning and conducting combat actions and in organizing measures for special propaganda. It would be extremely harmful to allow fictitious military-political situations to be used. We must work only from actual data on the political-morale state of the formations and large units of our probable enemy.

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Exercises makes it possible to accumulate experience in cooperation between political organs and staffs in organizing and conducting special propaganda. This cooperation includes the mutual exchange of information and the joint development of methods for disseminating propaganda materials in the enemy's operational-tactical zone and rear, for broadcasting radio propaganda using the organic radio means in political organs and the radio means of communications troops assigned for this purpose, etc. For example, the day before the exercise SHUMAVA, a seminar was conducted in one of the armies of the Carpathian Military District on the subject "Methods for Taking the Morale Factor into Consideration when Planning and Carrying Out an Army Operation". Along with workers from the political department, chiefs and officers from the operations, intelligence, and other departments of the staff and from the rocket troops and artillery participated in it. In accord with recommendations made at the seminar, during the exercises officers in the departments of the staff were designated to maintain continuous communication with the political department on problems of special propaganda.

Constructive results are also obtained during exercises from a more detailed and thorough working out of individual problems of organizing special propaganda. In particular, great attention was given in the Far East Military District in 1968 to the use of the forces and means of a propaganda detachment in an army offensive operation, to the organization of cooperation, in the field of special propaganda, with border troops and a large unit of river boats, to methods of using loudspeaker broadcasting sets in mountainous-wooded terrain, and to other measures. In January 1969 the political directorate of the Black Sea Fleet together with the communications and observation department of the fleet conducted a communications exercise during which the possibilities for setting up radio propaganda against the personnel of the US Sixth Fleet and NATO radio forces in the Mediterranean Sea were studied. Similar work is also being carried on in other fleets.

During combined exercises of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact, specific attention is given in the groups of forces, certain border districts, and fleets to coordinating efforts in the field of ideological warfare against the enemy. In particular, the main trends, appeals and slogans of special propaganda are coordinated, information-reference materials on the enemy are exchanged, agitation-propaganda documents are jointly worked out, mutual assistance with technical means of special propaganda is provided, etc.

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At the command-staff exercise SEVER a combined operations group for special propaganda was set up. It included officers from the political directorates of the Twice Red Banner Baltic Fleet and the Polish and East German navies. The group worked out problems of planning special propaganda and reported to the directing body of the exercise on the political-morale state of the enemy and the military-political situation in the area of the exercises. Practice leaflets were prepared and radio programs, information summaries and other documents were drawn up. This work was favorably evaluated by the directing body of the exercise, and contributed to the successful accomplishment of the operational tasks.

From the foregoing it is clear that working out problems concerning ideological warfare against an enemy is becoming an essential element of the activity of commanders, staffs, and political organs at command-staff and operational-tactical exercises and war games. Unfortunately, judging by experience, not all of the possibilities in this connection are being exploited, and sometimes work in this important area is entirely forgotten. Many times, in preparing command-staff and operational-tactical exercises and war games, necessary data are omitted from the concept for the exercises and the planning documents, and problems of organizing political work among the enemy troops and population are left out. In some districts, groups of forces and fleets, measures for special propaganda are implemented sporadically and incompletely or are not developed at all.

This can also occur in exercises when special propaganda is developed without due consideration for the operational situation. Because of poorly organized communications with the departments and services of staffs, political organs in exercises do not always have timely information available on the situation, and they plan and implement measures for special propaganda without adequate consideration of actual needs. There are also cases in which the requests of political organs for dissemination of propaganda materials by aviation and artillery forces are not taken into account in preparing the appropriate calculations, and positions for using technical means of special propaganda are not selected correctly enough.

Stereotypes and simplification in this field have still not been eliminated from exercises and war games.

The experience of the Great Patriotic War is sometimes applied mechanically to the new conditions.

Exercises are by no means always used to work out problems of fully mobilizing special propaganda contingents and improving the level of their

field training, or to seek more effective ways and methods of employing technical means of special propaganda under various combat conditions. Reserve officers with experience in the field of special propaganda are rarely assigned to exercises.

The tasks confronting the Armed Forces require that forms of work which have proven their value in the field of special propaganda be consolidated and expanded and that existing shortcomings be eliminated. These tasks can be accomplished only through the combined work of commanders, staffs, and political organs of all levels during both the preparation and the course of exercises.

At upcoming command-staff and operational-tactical exercises and war games it would be advisable, in our opinion, to give attention to a more detailed working out of the entire complex of problems involved in organizing and conducting special propaganda, both with the forces and means already available and with advance full mobilization of the special propaganda apparatus and contingents of political organs. There must be further study in the ground forces of forms and methods for organizing printed, radio, and loudspeaker propaganda in front and army operations, including the procedure for disseminating leaflets by the forces of aviation and the rocket troops and artillery; in the navy, the organization of radio propaganda against enemy naval personnel and the conduct of special propaganda during actions by marine large units and units must be studied.

There should also be a thorough study of the possibilities for organizing special propaganda during actions by large units and units of airborne troops. It is perfectly clear that these problems must be examined within the framework of the overall concept for a given exercise, taking into account the specific tasks confronting the respective district, group of forces, or fleet.

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The experience of the Great Patriotic War and of military actions in Korea and Vietnam convincingly demonstrates the need to carefully consider the morale-combat qualities of enemy personnel and to determine enemy strengths and weaknesses in order, with the help of special propaganda, to further the accomplishment of tasks confronting the troops to the maximum extent. This is why it is important while we are still at peace, and above all in exercises, to find and improve the most effective forms and methods for ideological warfare against the enemy. The readiness of commanders, political organs, and staffs to conduct special propaganda is an important factor in the combat and mobilization readiness of political organs, and of our forces as a whole.

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